

Newsletter

Summer Learning: Keeping children confident during the summer holidays

The summer holidays are a wonderful time for children to rest, play outside and enjoy a break from school. However, the long break can also mean that children lose confidence, focus and fluency in key areas such as reading, writing and Maths.

A small amount of calm, structured learning over the summer can make a real difference. It helps children keep important skills fresh, maintain good learning habits and allows children to return to school in September feeling positive and well prepared.

This summer, we'll be offering a variety of learning opportunities for children across different age groups. These will include 11+ face-to-face classes, 11+ online classes and Maths and English support sessions for pupils moving into Year 3 all the way up to GCSE.



Our 11+ classes have gone live this week with further summer classes being added after half term. These sessions are ideal for children who need to keep momentum, revisit tricky topics, build confidence or to simply prepare for an important year ahead.

We are very lucky to work with a team of incredibly talented teachers and teaching assistants. Their experience, warmth and subject knowledge allow us to offer high-quality support in a calm, happy and encouraging environment.

The aim is not to overload children. It's to help them keep learning, thinking and progressing over the summer. 11+ classes will be available to book this week, with additional classes for other year groups going live after half-term.

We look forward to helping your child stay confident, motivated and ready for a successful start in September!

Adapting, Learning, Growing: What teaching a student with PMLD taught me

With over 20 years of teaching experience, both in alternative and mainstream settings, I was confident I could deliver alternative provision as a tutor. Then came a referral for a student with PMLD.

"A profound and multiple learning disability (PMLD) is when a person has a severe learning disability and other disabilities that significantly affect their ability to communicate and be independent (NHS)".

This was a whole new world of educational provision; one that initially felt very overwhelming and well out of my comfort zone. Wheelchairs, hoists, medication, seizure management, standing frames, physio plans and 1:1 carers very much became the backdrop to our sessions. Self-doubt quickly set in: what could I offer? How could I possibly enhance this student's experiences?



As educators, we build relationships, we adapt and most importantly, we never stop learning. We do not give up. Working with a student with PMLD has been humbling - I have learnt so much! Positive interactions and shared sensory experiences, however small, can truly enhance a person's day and thus their life experiences. **My student is teaching me** how to bring curiosity, sensory fun, attention and communication to their day. We are on a journey together - I will continue to learn alongside. I only hope I can bring as much to my student as they have given me.

Claire Taylor is a member of the Forest 1st Tutoring team who is committed to connection, care and lifelong learning.

Active bodies, happier minds

There are so many benefits to exercise for young people. Not only is it great for children's physical health, but it is also very important for their mental health too. Exercise is known to release endorphins which basically makes you 'feel good.' This can help to improve self-esteem and confidence, relieve stress and reduce depression and anxiety. It also enhances brain development and is amazing for your sleep!

From my personal experience as a tennis coach, I have seen this with many young people. For example, there is one child I worked with who really struggled to concentrate at the beginning. However, by having a focus (in this case hitting a tennis ball), his behaviour improved significantly after a period of time. This was even reflected in his schoolwork, where his parents told me he was getting on much better with his lessons and they believed tennis had a real impact on this.

I've also seen the benefits of exercise as a PE teacher. Whenever I taught PE to my class, I could see a different side to many children when they were so positive and happy to be running around. I've also managed team sports such as football and hockey, where children use their social skills and strengthen bonds between one another, in order to strive towards the same goal. This is extremely helpful in building relationships with peers and reducing isolation and loneliness.

Overall, I would encourage any young person to exercise. This can be anything from walking to a sport or participating in one. What's most important is finding something they enjoy and can take part in for a sustained period of time. This will lead to improved mental well-being and overall happiness.

Sam is one of our tutors, who works with many young people all over Hampshire to support Alternative Provision. He is also a part-time tennis coach.



Safety and Guidelines

- ✓ Age-appropriate exercise
- ✓ Ensure proper supervision
- ✓ A variety of exercises
- ✓ 60 minutes of vigorous activity each day (NHS)



Staff Spotlight: Eloise

Hello! I'm Eloise and I have **extensive** experience teaching and mentoring children and young people aged 5 to 18 from a wide range of backgrounds, across both educational and creative environments.

My approach is shaped by my teacher training, with a strong emphasis on inquiry-based learning. I tailor each session to suit the individual needs of every student, combining structured repetition with engaging, creative and interactive activities.

Having studied English at Cambridge University, I have developed a strong passion for language and literature, which I enjoy sharing with the students I work with. I specialise in 11+ preparation and English tuition for Forest 1st Tutoring, helping young people to build both a confidence in learning as well as academic skills.

Outside of teaching, I work as a theatre and film writer/director, as well as a music artist. I also enjoy running, swimming and dancing and regularly volunteer within my local community.



Eloise (music artist Poesie) released her first single of the year on 1st May – a cover of Radiohead's brilliant *Fake Plastic Trees*. In the coming months, Poesie will be releasing their second EP 'Curious Eve', a pop fusion of Kate Bush, Muse and Madonna. You can check out all of Poesie's releases on Spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/artist/3u0oDpQfYr26yLOAGQZEV4?si=IbTuJuCP SiiAXGwxiT0SeQ>

Maths: The magic of Pi – the number that shapes our world

Pi (written as π) is one of the most fascinating numbers in maths. It represents the relationship between the distance around a circle (the circumference) and the distance across it (the diameter). No matter how big or small a circle is, the answer is always the same: approximately **3.142!**

What makes pi so special is that its digits never end and never repeat in a pattern. Mathematicians have calculated trillions of digits of pi, and they are still going! Pi has been studied for over 4,000 years and is used in everything from **engineering and space travel to music** and it's even seen in **nature**.



Many people celebrate “Pi Day” on 14th March (3/14) by enjoying Maths games (and eating pie too). Pi reminds us that maths can be full of mystery, discovery and wonder, helping us to better understand the world around us.

The hidden learning in outdoor play

With summer on the horizon, many parents look for ways to keep their children engaged, active and learning outside of the home. One of the most valuable and often overlooked learning environments is right outside the front door. Time spent outdoors plays a crucial role in children's physical health, emotional well-being and cognitive development.

Fresh air and open spaces naturally encourage movement, build strength, coordination and fitness. Beyond physical benefits, outdoor play also supports mental health. Being in nature has been shown to reduce stress, improve mood and boost concentration - something many children need after a busy school term.

Importantly, the outdoors provides rich, hands on learning opportunities that can't always be replicated indoors. Children can explore, ask questions and make discoveries in real time, developing curiosity, recording and problem solving skills. Whether it's observing insects, measuring puddles, or building dens, these experiences lay the foundation for deeper learning. Here are some simple summer activities:

Nature Scavenger hunt: Set nature clues/riddles to solve

Plant inspired data handling: Measure the growth of a plant every day

Mini beast exploration: Where do insects hide (take photographs)?

Den building and role play: Build your own space with natural materials

Animal tracks: Print a UK animal footprint guide and set off into the woods

Personal safety: Learn the responsibility that comes with personal safety

SAFETY NOTE: Many of the activities above will require adult supervision. Also, be aware that ticks become increasingly active at this time of year.



Mike Rich is a specialist in outdoor learning for Forest 1st Tutoring

Thank you!

Thank you to everyone for your continued support. We hope you all have a great holiday!

